

Let's debate both of them. Let's vote on both of them. Let's have the same vote requirement for both of them. At the end of the day, let's see who prevails. I do not think that is unreasonable.

Now, there are some on the other side, the Senator from New Mexico mentioned earlier, who want to offer more amendments. I am not opposed to more amendments. But there is a reasonable limit to this. We would like to end this in a timely fashion, so we can actually get something done.

If there are those who want to filibuster or run out the clock on either side of the aisle, then I cannot say I am going to support that point of view. This could be worked out. It should start this week. This ought to be an issue we can resolve, at least the debate, before we leave next week. We can do it. I think if we have a meeting of the minds, and a fair approach, we can see that done in the very near future.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maryland.

Mr. CARDIN. Madam President, first, let me thank the assistant majority leader, the Senator from Illinois, for his comments. I was listening intently to his message, which I think is one that is very important for this Nation.

The Senator talked about the fact that there is a significant amount of land currently available for drilling, and for reasons that are a little bit unclear, the oil industry has decided not to drill in those areas.

He also expressed his confusion, as I do, as to why the Republicans have come forward and said: Let's talk about the energy issue, let's do something about it.

But when it comes time to vote as to whether we can proceed on a bill that is important for our energy needs, the Republicans seem to vote against that so we cannot proceed.

We had a bill before us that would have dealt with renewable energy sources and would allow us to deal with solar and wind and biomass and biodiesel. The Republicans refused to allow us to move forward on that, requiring the 60-vote threshold so we could not move forward on a major bill dealing with renewables, which is clearly an important part of an energy policy for this Nation.

We had the Consumer-First Energy Act, legislation that would have brought forward a way to deal with the immediate cost of energy. The Republicans refused to allow us to proceed, used the filibuster to block that legislation that would have dealt with issues such as the oil cartel and the anticompetitive procedures they use to control supply and price of oil or to deal with price gouging or to look at ways we could take some of our resources and put them into renewables so we have a policy for the future or to deal with oil speculators.

But, no, the Republicans used the filibuster to prevent a full debate on the

floor of this body to talk about the energy policies of this country. So I return to the floor to tell Marylanders and the people of this Nation we need to do something about this. Marylanders are hurting today. I have talked about this before on the floor.

I can take you to some homes of seniors who are making a very difficult judgment not to use air-conditioning this summer during these oppressive days, which may very well jeopardize their health, because they do not have the money to pay for their utility bills.

They are making these tough decisions today in my State and States around the Nation. I could give you examples of independent truckers who are located in Maryland who do not have the money to fill their trucks with fuel because of the high cost of gasoline.

They don't know what they are going to do, whether they will be able to stay in business. I can tell you of small business owners I have met who tell me they don't have any alternatives. They have to use their cars for business. They have to fill up the car with gasoline, and they can't afford to do it. They are using their personal credit cards, the most expensive way to borrow money, because of the high cost of gasoline. They are looking to us to do something so they can stay in business.

I could take my colleagues to families who have to make tough judgments as to whether they can fill their gas tanks with gas or buy groceries because of the high cost of gasoline.

I met with people from the nonprofit community. We had people in from Meals on Wheels, volunteers who deliver food to people who can't get out of their homes and depend upon a nonprofit in order to get meals. In these tough economic times, there is more and more demand for their services, but their volunteers can't afford to fill their tanks with gasoline. They are doing on it their own, because we are asking them to pay the extra cost of the fuel. They are having a tough time being able to carry out their nonprofit mission, which will put more pressure on governmental services.

The list goes on and on as to why we need to deal with the energy crisis now and why we should have dealt with it before but for the filibusters Republicans have used.

The Republican answer to this problem seems to be to drill. Let me take up that issue for a moment. Most recoverable offshore oil and gas is currently open to drilling. Today most of our offshore oil areas are open to drilling. According to the Minerals Management Service, 79 percent of recoverable oil is currently open to drilling and 82 percent of recoverable natural gas is currently open to drilling. According to the Department of Interior, only 21 percent of the Outer Continental Shelf is actually in production. My friend from Illinois gave the numbers: 68 million acres of the 90 million acres of the Outer Continental Shelf are not in pro-

duction today. There is plenty of area available for drilling, but the oil industry has chosen not to drill in those areas. Instead they keep on mentioning ANWR, the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. That is a pretty sensitive environmental area. We all know that. We know the risks involved in drilling in ANWR. It would represent .6 percent of the world's supply. The National Petroleum Reserve in Alaska, which has been set aside for oil exploration, currently has available but not in production more oil reserves than are in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. So this isn't a point about where we have oil, we need to drill in order to get it. We have oil available. But the oil industry has chosen not to do this.

According to the Energy Information Administration, projections in the Outer Continental Shelf access case indicate that access to the Pacific, Atlantic, and eastern gulf regions would not have a significant impact on domestic crude oil or natural gas production prices before 2030.

The reason is we don't have a lot of oil in the United States. If we include all of the oil reserves, we have 3 percent of the world's reserves. We use 25 percent of the world's oil. We have 3 percent of the world's known reserves. So even if we produce at maximum capacity, we will not have a major impact on the pricing of energy.

It is for that reason I want to show this chart showing remarks from T. Boone Pickens, who said:

I have been an oilman all my life, but this is one emergency we can't drill our way out of. . . .

He goes on to point out:

. . . But if we create a new, renewable energy network, we can break our addiction to foreign oil.

If we produce every drop of oil we have in the United States, we are still going to be dependent upon foreign oil. We have to break our dependency on foreign oil. As Mr. Pickens points out, either in the short term or long term, oil is not the solution to our energy problem.

Having said that, I do believe we need to produce oil where we can. I am baffled as to why the oil industry is not using the 79 percent of currently leased area to produce more oil that would certainly be part of the solution to the energy problem. We can't drill our way out, but we certainly should produce what we can. Maybe this chart helps explain why the oil industry is not drilling where they can. The blue line represents the price of gasoline, showing when it was about \$1.50 a gallon, going up to now where it is close to \$4 a gallon. The red line represents the profits of the oil industry. It is amazing. As gasoline prices go up, oil profits go up. These are quarterly profits. So one might suspect that the oil industry is not exactly interested in bringing down the cost of gasoline. Their profits go up, as the costs go up. Maybe that helps explain some of the reason why production is not at the maximum capacity we currently could have.